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IN SHELTERED WAYS

*Daniel
Oscott*
BY
D. J. DONAHOE
"

AUTHOR OF "IDYLS OF ISRAEL," "A TENT ON THE LAKE
AND OTHER POEMS," ETC.



BUFFALO
CHARLES WELLS MOULTON
1895

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D. J. Donaldson

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IN SHELTERED WAYS.

*WHERE shadows linger, and the rays
Of noontide fall in dappled showers,
I love, along the sheltered ways,
To loiter through the summer hours.*

*The dew still lies on moss and flowers;
And the clear stream, 'twixt ferny brays,
Along its pebbly channel pours
With all the joy of April days.*

*Here, while the meadows are ablaze
With sunlight from the cloudless blue,
And the far hills in purple haze
Are hidden from the searching view,*

*I pluck the flowerets moist with dew,
And weave them into wreaths and sprays;
With fragrance wild and various hue
They soothe me in my sheltered ways.*

THE RESCUE OF THE PRINCESS.

DEEP in the shadow of an ancient grove,
Whose tangled boughs shut out the light of
day,
Where owls at noontide shrieked, and noiseone airs
Stirred through the trees with melancholy moan,
With towers of frowning gray o'ergrown with moss,
Its walls with mildew dank, a castle stood.
On every hand a heaven-defying hill
Rose sharp and steep against the wholesome
breeze,
Bathing its summit in the rolling clouds;
But the cold light that touched the snowy cliffs
Sank never back into the grove's dark breast,
And never on the castle windows fell
The pleasant light of morn. The yawning moat
That compassed it was foul with a green pool
Of stenching, stagnant waters, and the draw
Hung rusting on its hinges. Round the towers
Fluttered both day and night a cloud of bats,

And serpents crawled and writhed among the trees
With forked hissing tongues. Ages had passed
Since barbarous man's rude hand had raised this
pile,

And digged the moat, and set the trees that now
Grew rank against the day, and gave the place
Its sad and ominous name, "The Hold of Gloom."

Here dwelt the grim Goloso, cruel king;
Here in luxurious ease, entrenched behind
His fearful ramparts and the slimy moat
And gloomy horror of the wood, he lived,
And with his servile minions laid in waste,
By spoil and rapine, all the region round.

And here with pallid cheeks and weeping eyes,
The sweet Lavora, Princess of the Land
Of Light and Beauty, ravished from her home
By the fierce followers of the cruel king,
Was bound a prisoner in the gloomy keep,
And held for tribute from her suffering subjects.

Alas! the bitter anguish of her heart
What tongue can tell? And who can speak the
woe
That filled her soul, when with bowed head, and
hair

Streaming in golden clouds about her face,
She thought upon her misery and the want
Of her despoiled land and pillaged people,
And in heart-stirring tones she cried aloud,
In tones that spake in prophecy more than pain:—

“Lord, how the children weep!
O God, how the people are groaning!
While in the lonesome keep
Their queen is in darknees moaning,—
I that should, like a song,
Bring peace to their souls and gladness,
Under the rule of wrong
The cause of their strife and sadness!

“When shall the fair day dawn
That my prophet-spirit bespeaketh ?
When shall the night be gone
With the wrongs the darkness wreaketh ?
When shall Thy hand, O Lord,
Appear with a flaming morrow ?
When shall Thy flashing sword
Strike down all wrong and sorrow ?

“Hasten, O God, the day
Of justice and love and gladness!
Strike with Thy piercing ray
The spirit of gloom and madness!

Out of this hell-like keep
Oh, hear the voice of my moaning!
Lord, hear the children weep
And hark, how the people are groaning!"

Alas, how vain her wailing! nevermore
The mournful cries of sweet Lavora waked
The cruel king to ruth. No sorrow fell
Upon his greedy soul for others' woes;
No gentle love or sympathy distilled
The moisture from his eyes. His only dream
Was gain and rapine, and by dread decrees
He levied tribute on her suffering people
Year after year; and these, to save her life,
Brought with bowed backs and faces stooped to
earth
Their loads of wealth and laid them at his feet.

Their loads of wealth they brought from the fair
land
Of light and beauty; and the children cried
For hunger and the piercing winds that blew
Upon their naked limbs. The mothers' eyes
Were red for weeping, and the fathers toiled
In mute despair and dared not look to heaven
For vengeance of their wrongs. O grievous time!

O thoughtless throngs that labor as in dreams,
Is there no man amongst you shall rise up,
And casting cold despair from out his heart,
Strike for sweet justice in the name of God?

Now rosy morning softly draws aside
The purple curtains of the east and calls
The waking dawn. The birds are loud with song;
The soaring cloudlets curl in changing hues
Along the loftiest heavens; the hills are robed
In verdure freshened by the gray night mist,
And earth and sky smile on the new day's birth
With cheering light and passing loveliness.

And all alone young Lucio, roused from sleep,
Walks forth among the roses in the dew.
The rare sweet beauty of the waking earth,
And the soft colors of the changing clouds
Bring pleasure to his soul, and he lifts up
His face against the moist air with a heart
O'erflowing of grateful joy.

While thus he stands
The wailing of the children from the fields
Comes borne upon the breezes; and he hears
The voice of want and sorrow, and the cries

Of starving infants suckling at the breasts
Of wasted mothers, and the groans of men
Fallen under killing burdens. Then he seems,
While listening to their grief, to hear afar
The Princess in her anguish, from the gloom,
Singing her strains of prophecy: "O God,
Hasten Thy day of justice and of love,
Send peace unto these suffering ones of mine,
And strike this maddening darkness with Thy
light."

Oppressed with grief he stood a little space,
His ears still aching with the grievous sounds,
Then with uplifted face he spake aloud:
"O God, in all such loveliness and light,
These wails of woe come not from laws of thine;
These inharmonious jarrings grate upon
The ear of Nature, crying out against
The bastard laws that, foul as hell and false,
Speak in Thy sacred name."

Then quick he turned
And hastened to his brother, gentle Pio,
Rousing him from soft dreams: "O brother, rise;
Behold the sorrow and the wretchedness
That press upon the people! Hear the cries
That rend the heavens for pity! Ope thine eyes

And look about thee, brother. Thou shalt see
Sweet tender babes in wasted mothers' arms
Dying of cold and hunger; thou shalt hear
Strong men, grown stooped and gray before their
time,
Moan under burdens more than man can bear.
Arise, O brother, from thy bed of ease,
And light thy sacred torch. Go forth and call
The people from the fields, and bid them hear
The words of wisdom in the name of God.
Myself shall bear the flashing lance of fire
And lead them on, thou, brother, at my side;
The forest must be felled that light may strike
The gloomy castle; from thy torch shall fly
The bats and hooting owls and deadly snakes;
And the proud king must die. Then brother, rise,
The time is ripe when justice shall be done.”

Just then the rays of morn shot through the panes
And fell on Pio's gentle face, that shone
With a soft golden halo as he spake:
“ Thy voice, O brother, speaketh love and truth;
I hear the wailings of the suffering ones;
The woes of the oppressed against the heavens
Are beating hard for justice; and God wills
That justice shall not linger. I will go.”
He rose and lighted up the sacred torch,

And went among the people in the fields,
Calling them from their labors. One and all
They rose and followed him, their faces marred
By lines of sorrow and by hunger's pinch.
"O come, ye men, in God's name come," he
called,
"And hear the words of wisdom and of love."

His voice, so sweet and cheerful, drove away
The look of blank despair from every face;
And eagerly they followed after him
To where the youthful Lucio, with his lance
Flashing against the morning sunbeams, stood.
And pointing toward the youth, he cried aloud,
"O toilers, hear his words, for Lucio speaks
The words of love and wisdom; hearken well,
And follow where we lead."

Then Lucio said:

"Have ye not heard, O people, from the fields
The wailing of the children? See ye not
The red eyes of the mothers with the babes
Dead on their bosoms? Feel ye not even now
The fierce and pitiless pangs that hunger gives?
And wherefore is it that these things should be?
Your Princess lies a prisoner in the keep
Of grim Goloso, and to save her life

Ye sacrifice your own? O fools! O fools!
The power to save lies idle in your hands,
'Tis craven sin to slight it. Use the power!
The might of God is with God's people still,
And He demands a faithful stewardship.
Your children's lives and yours are in your keeping,
Your happiness and theirs ye have to guard!
Will ye go on forever poor weak slaves,
Hopeless, despised and starved? Or will ye rise
And strike a blow for liberty and right?"

A shout from the wild multitude arose
That rent the heavens,—"Lead on, we'll strike
the blow!"

" Your queen's a prisoner in Goloso's castle,
Goloso's in your power. What might can stay
The force of your fierce onset? Who withstand
The earnest strife of justice? Will ye go
And free the Princess from the tyrant's chains?
Thus shall yourselves be free. Speak out, O men;
For now's the time for action, will ye go?"

He ceased and for a moment silence reigned;
Then came a shout more mighty than the first,
With fiercer fury from the moving crowd;
"Lead on," they cried, "we'll follow where you
lead."

Now mounted on a pair of gallant steeds,
Richly caparisoned with gold and purple,
Lucio and gentle Pio led the way,
The armed host behind them voicing forth
A thunderous song of freedom.

And they came
To the dark grove, and heard the hooting owls,
And felt the shuddering airs that wafted out
From its black bosom, and the vapors foul
Sickened the breathing air, and the dread noises
Grated their ears with terror. So they turned,
With faces blanched for fear, and on their tongues
The brave words faltering in fainting tones,
They turned as if to fly.

Then Pio spake:
“Fear not, O men, but let the sharpened axe
Strike every tree and fell it to the ground.
So shall the darkness fly, and heaven’s light
Shall drive the serpents and the hooting owls
And the foul vapors from this dreadful place;
And all shall bloom again with flowering sweet-
ness.”

Then Lucio galloped swiftly to the front,
His long lance flashing still against the sun,

And pointing to the grove he cried aloud:—
“Be firm and falter not, O men of hope!
Press forward to the goal, and let not fear
Assail your spirits with false show of danger.
This is your hour of triumph and of glory!
Strike for the Princess and her liberty!
Strike, and strike now for justice, in God’s name!”

Scarce had the bold youth ceased his burning words

When with resounding strokes the axes fell,
And rotting timbers dropped on every hand.
The gentle Pio with his lighted torch
Led on through the broad way the toilers made;
The light of heaven filled all the widening glade,
Driving the shadows thence; and the wild sounds
Fled with the fleeting darkness.

Soon they came

To the deep slimy trench and looked upon

The “Hold of Gloom,” where the unrighteous king

Reveled in unearned wealth, and sat at ease
In never-doubted safety. With a roar
Of triumph and fierce joy that rent the skies,
Gaining new hope, they threw across the moat
Great trunks of trees, and battered down the bridge

From its long-rusted hinges. Then the throng
Surged like a mountain torrent swollen with rains
Through the small opening, tearing down the walls.

White-faced with terror from his loaded table
Goloso rose, and with the fawning wiles
Of a foiled tyrant, strove to save his life.
"I cry you quarter! Toilers, hear my words,
And weigh the promise that I make to you.
Your toils are great indeed, and my heart bleeds
To think upon your troubles; much of late
I've meditated measures of relief,
And deeply I rejoice to yield the boon.
The tribute shall be lessened. Ye shall pay
But half the tax hereafter. Is it not
A gentle offer that I make, O friends?
Your land shall bloom with plenty, and your lives
Shall be twice happier than they are to-day.
Hear, I beseech, O, friends, my words of peace."

Ah, cruel king, too late thy cowardly terms!
For now in ringing tones young Lucio's voice
Was heard above the impatient multitude,—
"No truce, O toilers, with unrighteousness!
The hour is yours; down with the ruthless king!"
Then burst the voice of the vast multitude
In dreadful answer echoing, "No truce!"

And like the sounding waves upon the beach,
They surged above the tyrant, trampling down
With merciless resolve the hated corpse,
Whose unclosed eyes glared upward glazed and
pale,
Where the lost soul had left them passing through.

Then from her gloomy prison-cell released,
The Princess came with face of beaming joy,
And lifted up her voice in a sweet song
That filled the valley with delightful music:—

“O God, Thy holy hour is here at last,
The night of hate and woe is overpassed;
And love shall rule the land forevermore!

“The clouds and shadows of the dark are gone,
The morning-star is bright, and the great dawn
Bespeaks the rising sun from shore to shore.

“O'er all the waking world the light divine
In streams of heavenly loveliness shall shine,
And every lingering wrong shall fly before.

“No longer men shall moan and children cry;
Upon the mother's cheek the tears are dry;
For light and love are ours forevermore.”

NATURE'S GLADNESS.

THE daises in the meadow
Are nodding to the breeze,
The purple clover blossoms
Yield sweetness to the bees ;
Across the skies the swallows
Are flitting to and fro—
About me and above me
There is no sign of woe.

The earth is fresh with greenness,
The skies are blue above ;
The heavens are full of glory,
The world is full of love ;
See how the light of morning
Gleams from the waves below!
So fill your heart with happiness,
And cast away all woe.

THE SLAIN CHRIST.

UP from the morning hills the light of dawn
In wavering streamers shot across the skies
In purple glory; in all the vales between
The fainting shadows fell, while the glad hills
Were lifting up their heads into the day.
On moist wings soaring, singing to the stars
That faded from the morning, rose the lark,
And from the darkling olive grove the thrush
Sent his clear music ringing o'er the vale.
Sweet perfumes from the meadows came, that filled
The morning with the thrilling joys of Spring;
And earth, enrobed in freshest loveliness,
Smiled to the pure skies with serene delight.

But one there was whose heart was bowed in woe.
Whose soul was racked with pangs of grief and fear,
As through the dusk she went from Bethany,
Swift-footed, hastening to Jerusalem.
That Virgin-Mother of the Son of God
In lonely watching and in fervent prayer,
Through the long night assailed the Father's ear,

To hold the bitter chalice from the lips
Of suffering Innocence, by her Son foretold.
“Thou knowest, O Father, that His enemies
Are whispering together for His woe.
Oh, let the cup pass, if it be Thy will,
And lift me out of sorrow.”

While she spake,
The moon yet riding high among the stars
In the blue west, came one in breathless haste,
That James Bar Zebedee, upon whose face
The glory of the anointed One of God
Had fallen, upon the mountain, crying out,
“Woman, thy Son, the Master, is betrayed!
The soldiers from the priests have seized Him, sold
By him He trusted for a bondman’s price.”
Then Mary, lifting up her voice, exclaimed,—
“O beautiful above the sons of men,
Whom God hath raised, and from whose lips is
poured
Pure grace among the nations, gird thy sword,—
As sang the prophet Bard of Israel,—
And in thy comeliness and beauty reign:
For justice, truth and meekness dwell in Thee,
And Thy right hand shall hold Thee wondrously.
Nay, Father, but He spake of death and woe!
And prophesied the evil of to-day,
That life might be indeed. Ah me! my heart

Already feels the sword of Simeon.
Swift are Thy arrows, O my God, and sharp;
But Thy throne is forever, and the sceptre
Of Thy dread kingdom is of righteousness.
Strengthen my mother's heart with patience, Lord,
To bear the burden of my woe, and take
The blindness from my eyes, that I may see
The tender light and beauty of Thy truth."

Then casting from her eyes the unbidden tears,
She hastened through the dusk from Bethany,
Alone, swift-footed, to Jerusalem;
And ere the sun rose up she reached the City,
Where motley crowds with murderous clamor loud,
Besieging Pilate for the blood of Christ,
Surged in wild waves before the Judgment Hall.

For while the Savior, bowed in agony
Beneath the sin and woe of all mankind,
Prayed in the darkness of Gethsemane,
Soldiers and servants from the chief priests came
With staves and torches in their hands, and led
By treacherous Judas, whom the Master trusted,—
Oh, full of guile and avarice, whose lips
Were baned with treason by the love of gain,—
And seizing the innocent Lamb, they bore Him
forth,
Amid the mockery of fierce shouts and jeers,

To the dread presence of that ancient priest,
Whose serpent cruelty and cunning long
Had been a by-word in Judea's land.
Him Annas looked upon with savage scorn,
And with malicious falsehood cried, "Behold
The man of blood. Bind him and guard him well,
And lead him straightway to the Sanhedrim."
Then they obedient bound the Savior fast,
And brought Him unto Caiphas, where he sat
Among the priests, waiting to work Him woe.
And Caiphas called aloud for witnesses
To speak against the Guiltless, but none came;
While abject in His sufferings the Christ,
Bearing the sorrows and the sins of earth
In His pure soul, before the cruel priests
Stood forth, a wounded and afflicted God.

But, for no witness came, the crafty priest,
Taught by the viper Annas in the way
Of cruel cunning, from his couch upsprang,
And to entrap the gentle Christ, whose speech
Knew naught of guile, cried, "By the living God,
Whose curse is on the tongue that falsely swears,
I charge thee strictly speak, art thou the Christ,
The Son of God, the King that art to come?"
And Jesus answering said, "Nay, if I speak
The truth thou wilt believe it not; I know
Thy words are spies with purpose to betray;

For if I move thee with fair questionings
To show the truth that liveth in My claim,
Thou wilt not answer lest the truth appear.
Know then, O Caiphas, thou hast said the truth;
For I am he of whom the prophets spake.
Here in My lowly need and misery
Thou seest Me subject to the Eternal Good.
But when, O priests, ye look on Me hereafter,
Ye shall behold Me coming in the clouds,
Amid the power and majesty of God,
To render unto men eternal meed."

Then Caiphas rent his garments, crying out,
"Lo, he blasphemeth and deserveth death.
What need we further witness? Ye have heard,
O priests, from his own lips the blasphemy.
To Pilate with the man; let judgment pass."

So when the Virgin, hastening through the gloom,
With soul oppressed, had passed the City gates,
She found the throngs before the Judgment Hall,
And Pilate seated on the throne of state,
Soft audience yielding to the multitude
That clamored for Christ's death. And lo, she saw
Her gentle Son with blood upon His face,
And cruel thorns upon His tender brow,

A mock crown for the King of love and truth,
Wrought by fierce hearts that knew nor truth nor
love.

And Pilate feared the multitude and asked
With doubtful heart, "What evil hath he done?"
But they, urged by the malice of the priests,
Cried with loud voice, "He hath deceived the
people;

He calls himself the Christ, the Son of God.
His crime is death, let him be crucified."

Then Pilate unto Jesus calmly spake,
"Hear'st thou the things they say concerning thee?
What answerest thou to these? Art thou a God?"
But Jesus standing silent, answered naught;
And Pilate spake aloud, "Behold the man!
I find no evil in him."

But they cried,
"Let him be crucified. What good can come
From Nazareth of Galilee? He stirs
The people to sedition; let his name
Be cursed among the tribes of Israel;
He makes himself a king.—There is no king
In Israel but Cæsar. If thou yield
In mercy to the tempter of Galilee,
Thou art no friend of Cæsar, but a foe;—
Let judgment swiftly pass against the man."

Then Pilate again turning to the Christ,
"Art thou a king?" and Jesus answering said:
"Yea, thou hast said it; but my throne is not
A throne of earth but of eternity.

To this end was I born, that I should be
A witness unto truth. The time is come
When glorified in shame the Son of Man
Shall work the Father's will."

And Pilate turned
In scorn and spake to the mad multitude,
"Behold your king." But they, "We have no
king;
There is no king in Israel but Cæsar.
Crucify the deceiver; let him die."
"Will ye that I shall crucify your king?"
An angry roar burst from the multitude
With the fierce words, "His blood be on our heads."

Then Pilate spake the word and the meek Christ
Was given unto death. O'er the rough way
To Calvary's height, scourged by the screaming
mob,
And mocked with bitter words and ribald jeers,
That Lamb of God was led to merciless death
On the uplifted cross. And through the press,
Slow-moving, the torn-hearted Mother followed,
Making sad moan; and when with a loud cry
He yielded up the spirit, breaking forth

In a low wail of prophecy she sang,—
While from the world the light of day was drawn,
And blazing stars fell shrieking through the skies,
Where thunder roared above the quaking earth;—

“Lift up your heads, ye everlasting hills;
Shout, O ye mountains, through your piney groves,
The closed gates of love are burst apart,
And mercy out of death receiveth life.
Sing and rejoice, ye nations of the earth,
Amid the glory of hope rejoice and sing;
For the devouring Serpent’s head is crushed
Beneath the heel of bruised innocence.
O bleeding wounds, whose blood shall fill the
world
With everlasting peace! O Life in Death!
Burst are the bonds of sin through the slain Christ,
And healing mercy lives forevermore.”

JULY.

NOW o'er the land the hot breath of the south
Wafts lightly, bearing from the meads away
 The bleeding perfume of the new-mown hay
That lies and gasps beneath the parching drouth.
The heifer leaves the sun and in the stream
 Wades mid-way; and the toilers seek, at noon,
 The shade and share their frugal meal full soon,
To bathe an hour in slumber and to dream.

The trees are dark upon the hills, and in
 The shade the birds have hushed the merry song
 Whose music in the morning cheered the plain.
Oft pass the shadows of the clouds between
 And o'er the hills. Then rumbling low and long
 The distant thunder tells of coming rain.

MARCH.

NOW warmer streams the light o'er vale and hill,
For waning Night resigns to waxing Day
The wand of power; and from the meadows gray
The snow has vanished, save where, lingering still,
Along the fences or beside the rill
Stray patches lie; his grasp the ice-king yields
Which lately choked the rivers and the fields;
And whilst his eyelids copious tears distil,
He finds no mourner save the whining wind.
The blue bird wakes the orchard with a song,
And calling crows soar glad above the wood;
The sights and sounds around me rouse the mind
To meditation; and I walk among
The pleasant places in responsive mood.

MID-WINTER.

THE pale day pants with weariness, and falls
In lingering twilight down the southern sky;
The clouds faint on the mountain-tops and die,
Their crisom garments turned to sable palls;
Out of the moaning wood the north-wind calls
The scattering rack, that pale from heaven doth
fly;
Then comes the moon with dewless wings on high,
And coldly soars along the vaulted halls.

The hills, white-sheeted sleep beneath the beams,
While down the slope the frosty breezes sweep
Through where the vales in shadows lose their
way;
Wrapped in its robes of ice the streamlet dreams
Of leafy loveliness, and half asleep,
Seems singing of the summer night and day.

NIGHT COMETH.

I WALK alone toward the setting sun,
And dark behind me my long shadow falls;
A solitary thrush with sad note calls
Unto his lost companions. Every one,
Save he, that warbled when the year begun,
Hath flown. Instead of singing festivals,
Naught comes but grief and mournful funerals,
And the still voice, "How little hath been done!"

Yet are the meads with asters overspread,
And soft the wind breathes through the russet
leaves,
That tremble in the trees; and far away
The rosy clouds rest on the mountain's head;
And still the wind seems singing as it grieves,—
"Night comes indeed, but after night the day!"

THE DEATH BELL.

SLOWLY the death bell tolls
Out of the ivied tower,
 Tolls, tolls,
 And the echo rolls,
Far away on the swelling air,
And dies like the whispered voice of prayer
 Where the dark clouds lower.

Ah ! she is dead, ye say ?
 Dead in her youth and bloom,
 Dead, dead,
 In her lowly bed,
Sprinkled over with flowers that faint
And fade under showerless skies, the saint
 Lies in deep, deep gloom.

Toll from your ivied tower,
 Toll through the skies O, bell !
 Toll, toll !
 For a sweeter soul

Never passed out of earth and pain,
And ne'er may we hope to see again
One that loved so well.

Deep in my dreaming soul
Lives the light of her eyes,
Lives, lives,
And a sweet hope gives !
Cease, O bell ! with your jarring tone !
Silence shall be and tears alone
Where my dead love lies.

THE LIGHT OF MAY.

HE came in the fair May morning
When the world was full of light,
Her cheeks like the wayside roses,
Her brow like the lilies white;
The woods were sweet with bird-songs,
The fields were bright with flowers,
And the love that sang in our bosoms
Gave wings to the speeding hours.

And oft in the noon of summer,
When the cattle sought the glade,
And stood knee-deep in the streamlet
In the shade that the hemlocks made,
We walked by the lake in the valley,
Where the sweet white lilies grew,
And our hearts sang loud as in springtime,
For our love was still as true.

When all the lanes and hillsides
With purple asters shone,
And out of the yellowing woodland
The voice of the thrush was gone,
We thought of the hours of summer,
As we saw the sun go down;
We sang with the love of May-time,
Though the furrows were bare and brown

And now from my woodland cottage
I watch the gathering night
As it falls o'er hill and valley
Where the snow lies deep and white;
And my heart is full of pleasure,
And my soul is full of pride,
For the light of my sweet May morning
Sits smiling at my side.

THY PRESENCE.

WHEN waking morn uplifts her head
Above the eastern main,
And shakes her dewy tresses fair,
And smiles o'er earth again,
I see thy form in every scene
That meets my anxious eyes,
And feel thy presence everywhere
In earth and air and skies.

The dew-drops glistening on the flowers
That from the ground upstart,
Are like the stainless purity
That lighteth up thy heart;
The breeze that softly whispereth
Within the budding tree
Is like the music of thy voice
When thou dost speak to me.

The deep soft azure of the skies,
That spreads from pole to pole,
Is mirror of the perfect truth
That liveth in thy soul.
Thus art thou, love, in every scene
That meets my anxious eyes;
Thus art thou present everywhere,
In earth and air and skies.

THE YOUNG LIFE.

THE harsh and cruel blast
Of March was overpassed,
And in the northing sun the skies were fair;
With the returning tide
Of warmth the countryside
Was glowing, and a sweetness filled the air.

The soft low warble of
The bluebird's voicèd love
Echoed among the orchard boughs all day,
And with a martial tune
In the late afternoon
The robin lifted up his cheerful lay.

The fresh and pleasant green
Already might be seen
Peeping above the dull brown of the hills;
The distant mountain side
And all the valleys wide
Sang to the rushing of a hundred rills.

The swelling buds rejoiced
In breezes soft and moist,
That floated from the southland warm and wet,
And where the streamlet ran
A merry group began
To search the banks for the first violet.

Upon the bridge I stood,
That spanned the rushing flood,
And looked upon the scene so fresh and fair,
While with a bounding heart
I felt myself a part
Of the young life that sprang about me there.

HOPES AND FEARS.

THE glory that comes with the light of the morning

Repays for the shadows that lived in the night;
The bright sparkling drops the green meadows
adorning
Were born of the mists that enshrouded the
light,—

How sweetly the mists have been turned into
light.

And so are the sighs and the tear-drops of sorrow
That spring from the heart over-burdened by
pain,

All turned to rejoicings and smiles when the
morrow

Comes back with her light and her beauty again;
So sweetly comes back with her pleasures again.

For grief hath its seasons of silence and weeping,
And surely the soul is made pure by the tears,
And joy hath its moments of laughter, still keeping
The heart in its balance of hopes and of fears;
And love is the cause of the hopes and the fears.

MEET ME IN THE EVENING.

O MEET me, darling, when the shades
Of evening are descending,
And through the dusky forest glades
The moon's young beams are bending;
When birds have ceased the woods to fill
With mellow notes and tender,
And from the fen the whip-poor-will
Sings out to the starry splendor.

O, meet me where the dappled shade
Of the old oak tree reposest,
And the brook in a silent pool is staid
Among the sweet-briar roses;
For there with the smiling moon above,
And odors sweet around thee,
I'll tell thee of the deep heart-love
With which my soul has bound thee.

THE WIND ON THE UPLAND FALLOWS.

THE wind on the upland fallows
Fell keen from a cloudless blue,
It leaped along the mountain
And murmured the woodland through.
In the stainless depths of azure
High soared the calling crow;
The jay replied from the hemlocks,
And the quail from the meadows low.

The floor of the lightened forest
By rusting leaves was strewn;
The boughs were bare and songless,
For the summer birds had flown.
But the lake in the distant hollow
Shone dreamily 'neath the sky,
Like a maiden who dreams sweet visions
In the light of a lover's eye.

The goldenrod and the asters
Were brown as the withered sedge;
But fairy gems of frost-work
Grew bright on the brooklet's edge.
And the world in the golden sunset
With glowing pleasure shone,
And there came no frown of sorrow,
Though the youth of the year was gone.

I AM WAITING.

I AM waiting, O my loved one,
For the rosy dawn to rise,
And with shafts of golden glory
Drive the darkness from the skies ;
I am waiting by the water
In the starlight cold and pale,
When the lingering morn awakens
Then to thee my bark shall sail.

I am waiting and the wavelets
As they break upon the shore
Seems to whisper words of comfort,—
“ We shall meet to part no more ! ”
Oh, but long the night remaineth,
And the morn delayeth long ;
And I walk beside the water
Wooing sorrow with a song.

LOVE CONQUERS.

AS a star falleth flaming through the night
And dies in infinite darkness, so my soul
To the dire hollow of despair and dole
Fell with fierce swiftness from Hope's luminous
height;
For with irreverent foot and loveless eye
I trod the golden regions of the sky.

And with unhallowed hand the mysteries
Of faith and love I touched unlovingly—
Sweet bonds that bind time and eternity—
I touched with impious hand, and through the skies
Fell headlong, fading as a lost star fades,
To move with restless feet 'mid horrid shades.

And day and night I wandered darkling where
Strange shapes were moving ever to and fro,
With faces sered by scorn and hate and woe,
And voices hoarse with cries of blind despair.
And looking, I beheld in a black mere
Imaged my face, oh God! grown ghastly sere.

Oppressed with fear I knelt and called aloud,
Cleaving the dank air with beseeching cries,
Straining my faint sight gazing in the skies
For comfort; till at last, as from a cloud,
A soft voice falling, tender as song of dove,
Filled all my soul and pierced my heart with love.

Then up from the dire hollow I was borne
On angel wings, and a sweet light arose
That filled the welkin with a thousand bows
Of promise, and I walked in the fair morn
That shone around me, glad with light and love
Streaming in radiant glory from above.

THE BETTER AGE.

I KNOW, O God, the dreaming is not vain
That shapes the better age, when man shall be
One vast mild brotherhood, and land and sea
No lines shall know to bound his fair domain;
When o'er the earth, redeemed and saved in love,
Peace shall sit brooding like a mother dove.

The dreaming is not vain; for in the soul
Our kinship with the eternal mind we feel;
And the dread silence of the stars that wheel,
Radiant of glory, round the changeless pole,
In bowed obedience, is but a part
Of the hushed love that liveth in the heart.

In Thy sweet will no evil dwells. Thy love
Breathes through the infinite chambers of all
space;
And man, awaking to the quickening grace
That streams harmonious from the halls above,
Shall mark Thy wondrous beauty, and in awe
Bow to the sweet perfection of Thy law.

The birds of morn are singing, and the sky
Pales to the promise of the coming day;
Hate and the fears of darkness pass away;
Man looks with gladness in his brother's eye,
And peace and love come singing o'er the plain;
I know my soul's sweet dreaming is not vain.

ETERNAL YOUTH.

THE pleasant south-wind breathes across the land,

And the earth looks, for all her weight of years,
As young as when she leaped from God's right hand
Among the spheres.

How lush the grasses grow and the sweet flowers,
Whose odors pierce the soul with keen delight!
Whilst glad birds nesting in their leafy bowers
Sing morn and night.

Among the glories of the growing year
Age disappears and youth eternal lives,—
I see and take, O Father, without fear,
What Thy hand gives.

Death is a dream ; and ever-during youth
Wakes from the wasted fragments of decay;—
The beauty of Thy love, Lord, and the truth
Pass not away.

CONSCIENCE.

WITH bitter soul in patience many days
I nourished vengeful malice, till at last
I found mine enemy within my power.
A heavy mist o'erhung the gloomy wood
Through which he was to pass, and every thorn
Dripped with gray globes, like venom on the stings
Of angered bees. I hollowed a deep grave
In the rank soil; and 'mid the clammy leaves
Concealed, I waited for a mad revenge.

The black crow, blacker limned against the sky,
From the tall tree-top looked at me askance,
Uttered one short harsh croak, and soared away.
The night-hawk, sidelong on a lichenized bough,
Sat silent, watching me with furtive glance,
Then bursting from his perch with startling sound,
Sent through my blood a chill of freezing fear.
The black snake, gliding through the unbending
twigs
Close to my face, slipped by me and despoiled
A warbler's nest of its small fledgelings, while

The parent birds, emboldened by despair,
Struck with vain flutterings, shrieking with the grief
That tore their little bosoms. Noiselessly
He moved through the moist brush, and left behind
Two stricken hearts in cruel anguish moaning.
With startling silence, like a summer bolt,
Out of the netted branches overhead,
A falcon swooped, and seizing in his talons
One of the mourners, bore it to swift death.

While still I gazed a rustling in the forest
Aroused me, and I lifted up my eyes.
Mine enemy approached. The sinking sun
Struggling in the late afternoon, shot down
A fair beam through an open place, that shone
Upon his countenance, and in the light,
Lo, I beheld the gentle look of Christ !

My heart leaped with a sudden fire of love,
And all the malice melted from my soul.
And rising I went forth and met my foe
On bended knee, craving a tearful pardon.
His features glowed with friendship, and he said:
“Life is too brief for hate; let both forgive.”
Even as he spake the mist was lifted up,
The sunshine sifted through the wood, and loud
The thrushes overhead sang their glad hymns.

THE FLOWER GIRL.

She walked along the street,
With bare and blistered feet,
And ere the stars were quenched in the white dawn
She took her daily stand
With basket in her hand,
And offered flowers for sale till day was gone.

Ah me! from dawn of day
Till evening twilight gray,
Through morning's chill and mid-day's blazing heat,
Patient and sweet and mild,
That uncomplaining child,
With toil and hunger fainting, kept the street.

Her eyes of softest blue
With silent pleadings through
The spirit went, and wakened tears of pity,
So sad it was to see
Such want and misery
Amid the wealth and splendor of the city.

With haughty, heedless eye
The rich man passed her by,
Nor noticed the starved face and tattered clothing;
And ladies fair and bright,
In raiment richly dight,
Sped on, and shunned her touch with heartless
loathing.

The poor, all callous grown
With sorrows of their own,
Saw nothing of the suffering in her face;
But in their hurrying strife,
The maddening war for life,
Jostled and pushed her rudely from her place.

Her flowers of fragrance rare
Were not more pure and fair
Than she, in rags, who brought them there each day;
But they who paused to buy
Saw not the pleading eye,
Nor felt her want, but grudged the paltry pay.

And as I looked I cried,
“ O Savior crucified !
Where is the peace that ushered in Thy birth ?
Is it not time that we
Thy dawn of love should see ?
How long, O Lord, will evil rule the earth ? ”

FREEDOM'S BANNER.

WHILE the stars in the blue remain,
And the rosy shafts of morn
With their peaceful light shall cleave the night
For the day that is newly born,
For the hope of the day that is born,—
So long shall Freedom reign!
And the red, white and blue, as her banner true
Shall float over land and main.

And the waves of the surging sea,
And the wind that sweeps the sky
Shall sing of her birth to the listening earth
While her colors are streaming high,—
While her banner is waving on high,—
No traitor shall there be!
For Freedom's hand shall guard our land,
And her flag shall rule the sea.

“OLD GLORY.”

God bless our country's banner! Let her float
in streaming glory!
From Atlantic's whitened beeches to Pacific's
golden shore,
From the corn-fields of the northland to the south-
ern wave the story
Of her triumph shall be blazoned forth in pæans
evermore.

Hark! the shouts that fill the heavens from the
congregated nations!
Hark! the wailings of the world are changed to
voices of delight!
For the red blood of the people swells the veins
with swift pulsations
As they look upon “Old Glory,” type of liberty
and right.

And the choicest blood of nations flowing freely
o'er our borders
Fills the heart with noble homage where the
blesséd banner waves;
Fills the heart with noble homage, and it leaves all
soul disorders
With the coronets of tyrants and the clanking
chains of slaves.

O, the breeze shall bear her lightly in his arms, a
gentle lover,
Over one united nation, one fair flag forevermore;
And the traitor who shall dare to raise a foreign
rag above her,
Let the cyclone of a people's anger sweep him
from our shore!

While the star-gemmed vault of azure fills the
night with radiant promise,
While the white and rosy dawn awakes the world
to newer light,
Stars and stripes shall shine above us, and all foes
shall keep far from us,
Stars and stripes shall shine a pledge of union,
liberty and right.

THE SWIFT DAWN.

I WATCHED the sun in the afternoon
Move slowly, slowly down in the west,
And slowly, slowly the silver moon
Rose out of the east like a bride full dressed.
The robin sat by his mate on the nest
And sang his song in a martial tune,
Till the slumbrous breezes rose from their rest
And filled the night with the breath of June.

The breezes rose and the stars looked down,
Looked soothingly down through the darkening
air;
And, its waters to whispering wavelets blown,
The lake in the valley lay broad and fair;
The starlight danced in the ripples rare,
And shaken by sorrow I left the town,
I fled to the vale, by the waters there
The cares of the world and its woes to drown.

And all night long through the silent hours
I walked alone with unresting feet;
And love seemed lost in earth's grasping powers,
And the ease of death seemed gracious and
sweet;
Then the swift dawn came, and a voice to greet
The day rang loud through the wakening bowers;
And sorrow took flight upon pinions fleet,
For love was alive with the birds and flowers.

THE HERMIT THRUSH.

O H, sing away, sweet warbler! let there be
No ending to the song; for like a ray
Caught from the dead past, in thy rapturous lay
A world of memory liveth unto me!
Thy tender strain is a soft odor, born
Of dewy roses in life's careless morn.

What angel poured that melting melody
Into thy small, warm heart, O happy bird ?
What tones of heavenly music hast thou heard
That so thou sing'st with such fine harmony,
Teaching the flowery valley to rejoice
And thrill responsive to thy silver voice ?

The clear spring gurgles down its pebbly bars,
Singing its low soft music over and over;
The hum of bees comes up from the white clover,
Mingled with fragrance; whilst like falling stars
Thy swift, bright notes across the valley float,
Till every worldly care is quite forgot.

And here on the green turf I lie and dream,
Drinking the perfect sweetness of the day;
And feel within my soul the gentle ray
Of childhood innocence—the golden gleam
Of closing heaven that shineth not in vain;
Sing on, sweet bird, nor cease the holy strain!

MY LOVE IS FAIR.

MY love is fair as the morning,
And round her shoulders fly
The clustering locks like the cloudlets
That float in the morning sky.
And bright are her eyes as the dew-drops
That shine on the pointed thorn;
Oh, sweet is my love as the lily,
And fair, oh, fair as the morn.

My love is fair as the evening
When daylight dies on the hill,
And the stars stoop down to listen
To the song of the whip-poor-will.
And soft are her words as the breezes
That breathe o'er the flowery lea;
Oh, sweet is my love as the lily,
And fair as the eve is she.

I WALK ALONE.

I WALK alone by the streamlet,
Where it flows through the leafy dell,
And list to the song of the wood-thrush,
The song she loved so well.
Oh, sweet from the shadowy hill-side
He trills each echoing tone ;
But far from me is my loved one,
And I list to the song alone.

The crimson clouds o'er the mountain
Are darkening on the blue ;
The flowers on the fields around me
Are moistening with the dew ;
The birds in answering music
Are singing of love and cheer ;
But sorrow and tears are mine, love,
For thou art no longer here.

The scented blossoms I gather,

As oft I've done before ;

But oh, my heart is breaking!

Thou tak'st the flowers no more.

I list to the bird's soft music,

And the crimson clouds I see,—

Oh, all is beauty and love, dear,

Why com'st thou not to me?



BENEDICTA.

A MID the voiceless shadows of a dell,
Where a still stream with a sluggish motion
crept,
A fair pale maid, of whom my song shall tell,
Lived, like the shadows that about her slept,
A life of lonely sadness and of gloom,
While odors dank arose as from a tomb.

The deadly nightshade dropped its blistering dew
Upon the sickly roses underneath,
And no green cricket chirruped where it grew,
No birds dared come the noxious air to breath ;
No song by day, no pleasant sound by night,
Eve brought no rest, and morning brought no light.

Fair Benedicta was the maiden's name ;
Her father's grave beside the cot appears ;
Her mother, a decrepit, withered dame,
Room-bound by bodily pains for many years,
And soured by sorrows of her feeble plight,
Required the maiden's care both day and night.

Rude was the cot where Benedicta dwelt,
Dark with a cloud of clinging vines o'ergrown ;
The touch of love her soul had never felt,
A dream of joy within her heart ne'er shone ;
And yet no fretful longings came to tease,—
She wrought her homely duties with strange ease.

Her only pleasures by the stream to muse
And look upon her image in the tide,
To pluck pale flowerets moistened by the dews,
Or o'er the darksome forest walks to glide,
And through the boughs catch glimpses of the sky,
And watch the clouds and stars go sailing by.

In winter when the trees their barren boughs
Flaunted in anger black against the sky,
When the wind roared above the shuddering house
Or shrieked among the tree-tops wild and high
She crouched beside the struggling fagot fire,
Oppressed with fears and pale with bodings dire.

And when the snow came sifting through the trees,
Or the mad winter rain that freezing fell,
Weaving ice-robes that crashed in the next breeze,
And strewed with shattered sheen the lonesome
dell,

With wearied gaze she watched the fagots burn,
And fondly dreamed of lingering Spring's return.
Thus with lone fears and solitary care,

Slowly and mournfully passed the circling years,
Till white streaks shone in Benedicta's hair,

And furrows marked her face ; but never tears
Took from her eyes the luster wild and wan,
Where the sweet patience of her spirit shone.

An April morn when from the earth uprose,
Gray exhalations that enrobed the dell
In a weird shroud, and drove the lingering snows
In screaming torrents over field and fell,
The mother with a moan of blest relief
Cast her frail body and passed from earthly grief.

Then all alone poor Benedicta stood
In wrenching sorrow more than she could bear ;
And with loud wails she pierced the echoing wood ;
Tears from her eyes came streaming, and a prayer
Broke from her torn heart, and with head bowed
low,
“ Dear God,” she cried, “ have mercy on my woe.

“ Look down with mercy and pity on my woe,
Forgive the senseless tears I can not keep ;

Thou knowest the need that presseth me so low,
Thou knowest the sorrow that maketh my heart
weep ;
There is no neighbor hand to bring relief,
No heart to share the burden of my grief.

“ Dear God, I throw myself upon Thy care ;
My heart and hopes and all my woes are Thine ;
I take the things Thou givest without despair ;
But O, sweet Lord, what grievous loss is mine!
Alone to bide in this weird wilderness,
With never human face or voice to bless ! ”

How long she stayed thus bowed she could not tell ;
But night’s black shadows gathered ere she rose ;
The distant rills sang dirges through the dell,
To torrents swollen, fed by the fleeting snows ;
She trimmed her fire and tricked her meager light,
And sat by the dead mother through the night.

All night, all night, a long and weary while!
But from her eyes the sudden tears were dried,
And on her lips sat something like a smile ;
The worst was over ; her soul was purified

By the loud wail, the harrowing grief, the tears ;
In patient prayer she bode all free of fears.

When through the trees the rays of morning fell,
With rod and reel appeared a careless throng.
And dithyrambic music waked the dell
To echoes that had slumbered there too long ;
A wild sweet song of love and merriment
From the glad lips of men on pleasure bent.

As guided by sure fate before the cot
They paused, and entering at the open door,
Beheld the hapless maiden's woeful lot
And felt her need. With pious hands they bore
The burden forth, and hollowing in the shade
A simple tomb, the dead to rest was laid.

And one, the eldest of the band, remained
To sooth the maiden in her sore distress ;
A trusty brown-faced husbandman, who feigned
No sympathy, but with honest will to bless,
Smoothed from her heart by gentle words and low
The grating grief of loss and festering woe.

Anselm the farmer's name ; and long he stayed
In the rude cottage that fair April morn,
On his sweet errand with the lonely maid ;
And ere he went within his soul was born

A dream of love, and from the maiden's face
A glory shone that brightened all the place.

And Benedicta's soul with light divine
Was lifted up to loveliness and grace ;
As rays that through cathedral windows shine
With sacred splendor glorify the place,
So in the sacred flame of love doth start
A throbbing glory in the maiden's heart.

And now the voiceless shadows fall no more
About the lonely cottage in the dell ;
No more the nightshade hangs above the door,
Where Anselm and fair Benedicta dwell ;
For his strong hand has tamed the sullen gloom,
And birds are singing and fair roses bloom.

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